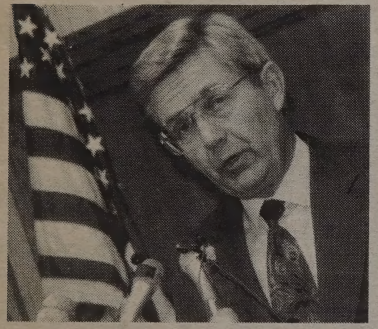
NEWS BY CARA DEGETTE

# CFV hijacks free-press debate

## Perkins co-opts conflict onto familiar ground — sex, morality



**AN ARGUMENT OVER WHAT students can write in school-sponsored newspapers has been co-opted by a Colorado for Family Values crusade against promiscuity and sexual deviancy.**

CFV Chairman Will Perkins hopes thousands of supporters will flock to a school board hearing tonight, Jan. 15, at Wasson High School, to urge District 11 to adopt a sexual conduct policy for students. Perkins initially planned to have a huge spotlight at the school to guide supporters, but that idea was nixed after he met with district security, said D-11 spokeswoman Tracy Cooper.

The show of force is part of a "Protect the Children" campaign that includes 130,000 postcards distributed by CFV through more than 100 local churches. The cards, addressed to the board, read: "I strongly urge you to

**CFV Chairman Will Perkins**

enact a policy for every aspect of school life which discourages experimentation with any kind of promiscuous sexual activity, promotes abstinence and affirms traditional marriage." Nearly 750 had been received at D-11 offices early this week.

Focus on the Family has joined the crusade. Last week, ministry president James Dobson broadcast a special edition of his radio show supporting Perkins' efforts — the first time the ministry has dedicated a radio show to a local issue.

At the heart of the debate is an article and an editorial addressing gay teens in the Oct. 24 issue of the Palmer High School student newspaper, the *Lever*. Perkins complained to the administration, and the board agreed to review the district's policy on student newspapers.

During the on-air Focus roundtable, Perkins said he was perturbed after learning nearly 40 people sent letters to the district supporting the *Lever* articles. "Most people — most responsible parents — don't want an anything-goes sexual conduct policy for their students and for their children," Perkins said.

Perkins said he has "talked with all the school board members personally, and they have all expressed their desire for this kind of a policy."

"This is what they would like to advocate," he said. "What we would like to do is be sure that they know that the vast majority of the people of Colorado Springs are behind them."

However, board member Bruce Doyle said he has not endorsed Perkins' proposal. He took issue with the implication that the district currently endorses promiscuity, and said D-11's sex-education programs encourage abstinence.

"It does bother me that people think we would tolerate any of these things," Doyle said. "I think we have a policy on the books that addresses every one of the concerns on those postcards."

Further, Perkins apparently misled some pastors and congregations on the topic of tonight's hearing. In a Jan. 7 memo to area pastors, Perkins advised pastors to tell their congregations that "the district school board has requested community input regarding a sexual conduct policy."

**"I think a [sexual conduct] policy like this should be in every district in the United States."**
**— CFV board member Martin Kuhn**

Doyle called the remark a "stretch." The board had actually requested input on a draft revision of the district's student publications policy, and Doyle said board members expect to stick to that narrowly defined topic at the hearing.

State law clearly defines the rights of student newspaper editors, and Doyle, who worked on the revision, said only minor changes will be recommended. They include giving student newspaper instructors and advisors the right to issue assignments, and requiring each student newspaper to carry a disclaimer stating that the newspaper's views are not necessarily those of the district.

Perkins insisted, however, that "this is not an argument about First Amendment rights and that sort of thing." As his proposal has gained steam, Citizens Project has come out swinging, accusing CFV of wasting taxpayers' time and money and lambasting the group for what it termed a "last-ditch attempt at censorship."

However, Patrick Jones, communications director at Holy Apostles Catholic Church, said he believes the sexual conduct statement sends a "positive reinforcement." His church has distributed about 1,200 postcards.

Jones said he is not bothered by Perkins' incorrect assertions that the district is seeking input on a sexual conduct policy, because the message itself is a "loving statement of affirmation."

Doyle said he will attend the school board hearing with an open mind. Still, he recalled an encounter he had with one 84-year-old churchgoer who contacted him after the postcards were distributed. "This lady was adamant that this [discussion] belongs in the family, not in the school," Doyle said.

However, if some have their way, the "Protect the Children" campaign may not stop at District 11's school doors. Appearing on Dobson's radio show, CFV board member Martin Kuhn — who also serves on the District 3 school board in Widefield — said he intends to introduce a similar measure there.

"I don't know why we have to limit this to Colorado Springs," Kuhn said. "I think a policy like this should be in every district in the United States." ⚡

***The District 11 school board's public hearing takes place 6-8 p.m. tonight at Wasson High School, 2115 Afton Way. Call 520-2004 for details.***

# 'RUTHLESS' TACTICS IN OTHER CITIES HINT AT FRIENDLY JAVA GIANT'S OTHER SIDE

BY NICOLE NOLAN

owes much to an aggressive business ethic that targets affluent urban markets for specialty coffees. Starbucks' modus operandi is to enter desirable areas quickly and in force, driving out competitors in order to establish itself as the leading coffee retailer. Its well-informed and well-funded real

**"The thing I really resent is this deep-pockets approach — going behind people's backs and writing big checks. Starbucks is very, very aggressive."**

fortable place to recharge. "We are not in the coffee business serving people," states Starbucks' 1995 annual report. "We are in the people business serving coffee. At the crossroads of the community, Starbucks offers a tranquil corner where you can fit in without thinking. You are welcome here, as interesting